

State of South Carolina

Governor's Proclamation

WHEREAS, Penn Center was founded in 1862 as Penn School and was one of the first schools to offer an education to formerly enslaved African-Americans of the Sea Islands; and

WHEREAS, when the school closed in 1953, Penn Center became a community development center, focusing on issues ranging from daycare to healthcare to civil rights and the preservation of Gullah culture; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, the 50-acre Penn School campus was designated a National Historic Landmark District by the United States Department of Interior; and

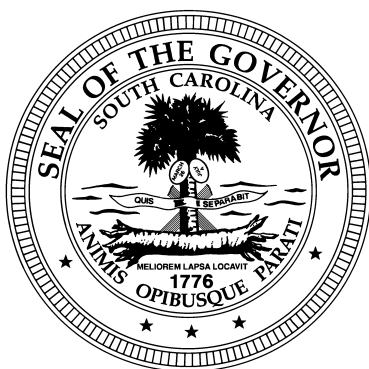
WHEREAS, first celebrated in 1981, the Penn Center Heritage Days Celebration has grown from a single day of events to three days of festive songs, meals, performers, displays, storytellers, and more; and

WHEREAS, Penn Center Heritage Days has become a significant event, drawing over 15,000 visitors from South Carolina, the nation, and abroad in celebration of the many contributions made by African-Americans of the Sea Islands to our rich cultural heritage.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark Sanford, Governor of the Great State of South Carolina, do hereby proclaim November 8 – 14, 2004, as

PENN CENTER HERITAGE DAYS

throughout the state and encourage all South Carolinians to recognize the value of local festivals and celebrations to the preservation of our unique culture.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Sanford".

MARK SANFORD
GOVERNOR
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA